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S E C R E T ROME 000571

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/12/2013

TAGS: [ETTC](#) [IR](#) [PARM](#) [PREL](#) [IT](#) [EXPORT](#) [CONTROLS](#)

SUBJECT: ITALY HOLDS UP SHIPMENT OF FAST BOATS TO IRAN

REF: A. ROME 562

- [1](#)B. ROME 445
- [1](#)C. ROME 399 AND PREVIOUS
- [1](#)D. STATE 29285

CLASSIFIED BY: ACTING DEPUTY CHIEF OF MISSION SCOTT KILNER
FOR REASONS 1.5 (B)(D)

[1](#)1. (S) FOLLOWING ANOTHER EMBASSY INQUIRY TO THE MFA ON FEBRUARY 11, GIUSEPPE MANZO, SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR ECONOMIC AFFAIRS MARCELLO SPATAFORA, TOLD ECONOFF FEBRUARY 12 THAT SPATAFORA HAD CONTACTED THE ITALIAN COMPANY SB DESIGN TWO DAYS AGO TO ASK THEM TO HALT THE IMPENDING SHIPMENT OF HIGH-SPEED PATROL BOATS TO IRAN. MANZO SAID THE COMPANY ACCEDDED TO SPATAFORA'S REQUEST, PROMISING NOT TO DELIVER AT THIS TIME A SHIPMENT OF TWO CONTAINERS EXPECTED TO LEAVE THE COMPANY'S PLANT IN LOMBARDY FOR NAPLES WITHIN DAYS. (MANZO DID NOT KNOW HOW MANY BOATS WOULD HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN THE DELIVERY, NOR COULD HE EXPLAIN THE DISCREPANCY WITH OUR INFORMATION THAT THE BOATS HAD ALREADY ARRIVED IN NAPLES, PER REF D.)

[1](#)2. (S) MANZO EMPHASIZED THAT SPATAFORA'S REQUEST HAD BEEN "UNOFFICIAL AND UNORTHODOX" AND DONE OUTSIDE OF ANY FORMAL GOI AUTHORITY, AND THAT THE ULTIMATE "DECISION" TO HALT THE SHIPMENTS HAD BEEN THAT OF SB DESIGN. MANZO ALSO CHARACTERIZED THE SHIPMENT AS BEING HALTED "FOR THE MOMENT."

[1](#)3. (S) COMMENT: SB DESIGN'S COOPERATION WITH THE GOI'S REQUEST MAY BE LINKED TO ITS APPARENT DESIRE (CONVEYED TO US EARLIER BY MFA NON PROLIFERATION COORDINATOR DE MOHR) TO WIN A MUCH MORE LUCRATIVE CONTRACT WITH THE ITALIAN GUARDIA DI FINANZA (CUSTOMS/IMMIGRATION POLICE). DE MOHR ALSO TOLD US THAT, FOR "BUSINESS REASONS," THE COMPANY HAS DECIDED NOT TO PURSUE FURTHER SALES IN IRAN.

[1](#)4. (S) COMMENT CONT: WE WILL NEED TO FOLLOW UP WITH THE MFA TO ENSURE THAT THIS TEMPORARY HOLD BECOMES PERMANENT. FOR THE MOMENT, HOWEVER, IT APPEARS CLEAR THAT THE GOI HAS HEARD OUR MESSAGE AND ACTED UPON IT TO PREVENT HANDING US A FAIT ACCOMPLI. END COMMENT.

SEMBLER

2003ROME00571 - Classification: SECRET